

FCC REPORTS- DESPIERTA AMERICA NEWS- JULY 2012- PART 2

FCC REPORTS DESPIERTA AMERICA NEWS JULY 1

ECONOMISTS LESS BULLISH AS EARLY 2012 GAINS WITHER - Economists say the sales and profit gains of early this year are disappearing, and they are increasingly pessimistic about short-term growth. They are also gloomy because of the potential impact in the U.S. from Europe's financial crisis, the possible expiration of the Bush tax cuts in December, and the prospect of major cuts in federal spending. A survey by the National Association for Business Economics released Monday also found less evidence of hiring, confirming the trend in recent monthly jobs reports from the government

GAS PRICES MAY BE BOTTOMING OUT - Gas prices have dropped nearly seven cents over the past three weeks -- but that recent slide may be coming to an end. Lundberg Survey publisher Trilby Lundberg says prices will stop falling because crude oil prices haven't really dropped in several weeks. Right now the national average for a gallon of regular gasoline is \$3.41. That's more than 20 cents cheaper than this time last year.

STUDY: PARENTS PULLING BACK ON COLLEGE SPENDING - Families have implemented more cost-saving strategies to cut college spending in the past academic year, choosing less expensive schools and finding more economical ways for students to attend. More students also are living at home in order to help afford college, according to new survey results. The findings are from an annual study released Monday by Sallie Mae, the country's largest student lender. They show that the average amount spent on college by families responding to the survey declined by 5 percent in the 2011-12 school year. More parents and students alike said they make their college decisions based on the cost they can afford to pay than in the previous four studies

FORD-RECALL - The Ford Motor Company is recalling more than 8,000 of its 2013 Escape compact SUVs because of a potential problem affecting the brake pedal. The recall affects SUVs made between March 8 and June 7, 2012, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. There are 8,266 Escapes involved in the recall. Ford says mispositioned carpet padding on the center console trim panel may be pushed outward, reducing clearance with the pedals, according to the NHTSA. That reduced clearance may mean the driver's foot could brush the side of the brake pedal when going from the accelerator to the brake, thus increasing stopping distances and the risk of a crash

SEIZING MORTGAGES - In the foreclosure-battered inland stretches of California, local government officials desperate for change are weighing a controversial but inventive way to fix troubled mortgages: Condemn them. Officials from San Bernardino County and two of its cities have formed a local agency to consider the plan. But investors who stand to lose money on their mortgage investments have been quick to register their displeasure. Discussion of the idea is taking place in one of the epicenters of the housing crisis, a working-class region east of Los Angeles where housing prices have plummeted. Last week brought another sharp reminder of the crisis when the 210,000-strong city of San Bernardino, struggling after shrunk home prices walloped local tax revenues, announced it would seek bankruptcy protection. Now -- and amid skepticism on many fronts -- officials from the surrounding county of San Bernardino and cities of Fontana and Ontario have created a joint powers authority to consider what

role local governments could take to stem the crisis. The goal is to keep homeowners saddled by large mortgage payments from losing their homes -- which are now valued at a fraction of what they were once worth.

07/17/2012

CALIFORNIA. TESTS IN JEWELRY - MARIA EUGENIA PAYA- MIAMI, FLORIDA - California is cracking down on more than a dozen businesses accused of selling and distributing costume jewelry containing dangerous levels of lead despite repeated warnings. State investigators uncovered hundreds of lead-laced trinkets marketed to children and adults, including some pieces contaminated with lead levels more than 1,000 times the legal state limit. The state was expected to file a lawsuit Tuesday against 16 companies -- retailers, wholesalers, suppliers and distributors -- doing business in Los Angeles and elsewhere. The companies are accused of violating lead standards and engaging in deceptive practices by falsely advertising tainted jewelry as lead-free. For the past three years, inspectors at the state Department of Toxic Substances Control conducted spot checks at stores and factories, zapping necklaces, earrings, hair clips and tiaras with hand-held X-ray devices to check for lead. Items with high lead content were then shipped to a laboratory for detailed analysis. Jewelry items containing the toxic metal were mostly inexpensive. Brian Johnson, deputy director of enforcement, said these were not isolated cases.

NAPOLITANO IMMIGRATION - Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano is heading to Congress to discuss immigration. Napolitano, who is to appear Thursday before the House Judiciary Committee, is testifying for the first time since the Obama administration announced plans to stop deporting many illegal immigrants brought to the United States as children who don't have a criminal record. The policy change, which could affect more than a million illegal immigrants, allows eligible people to stay in the country and apply for work permits. House Republicans have widely criticized the plan, calling it backdoor amnesty that circumvents the will of Congress. Judiciary Committee Chairman Lamar Smith, a Texas Republican, has been among the harshest critics of the administration's immigration enforcement policies

FORECLOSURES-OLDER HOMEOWNERS VO: 27 - More than 1.5 million older Americans already have lost their homes, with millions more at risk as the national housing crisis takes its toll on those who are among the worst positioned to weather the storm, a new AARP report says. Older African Americans and Hispanics are the hardest hit. The Great Recession has been brutal for many older Americans, said Debra Whitman, AARP's policy chief. This shows that home ownership doesn't guarantee financial security later in life. Even working two jobs hasn't been enough to allow Jewel Lewis-Hall, 57, to make her monthly mortgage payments on time. Her husband has made little money since being laid off from his job at a farmer's market, and Lewis-Hall said her salary as a school cook falls short of what she needs to make the payments on her home in Washington. Lewis-Hall and her husband have been making their payments late for about a year, but panic didn't set in until recently, when the word foreclosure showed up in a letter from the bank. You're used to living a certain way, but one thing leads to another Lewis-Hall said. It's not like I have a new car or anything. I'm driving one from 1991. According to AARP: About 600,000 people who are 50 years or older Americans are in foreclosure. 625,000 in the same age group

are at least three months behind on their mortgages. 3.5 million -- 16 percent of older homeowners -- are underwater, meaning the home value has gone down and homeowner now owe more than their homes are worth. AARP said that over the past five years, the proportion of loans held by older Americans that are seriously delinquent jumped by more than 450 percent

BORDER SECURITY - Securing our border with Mexico is an on-going fight that our country just can't seem to solve. Billions of dollars in drugs, weapons are smuggled across every year...But now, a group of scientists may have an effective solution. ABC 15's Steve Kuzj introduces us to Dark Pulse. That chase could end soon, if new border security devices like Dark Pulse are installed. It's an advanced fiber optic type cable. When buried in the ground, it can detect any types of movement happening underground... making it the perfect weapon to stop drug cartel tunnels. One of the best parts is that the device can pickup intruders anywhere around it, not just directly on top. O'Leary estimates a strategic Dark Pulse system could monitor the entire U.S. - Mexican border for under \$30 million. A potential cost-effective solution to a problem that has needed solution for decades.

GROUND BEEF RECALL - Hannaford Supermarkets is alerting consumers that Cargill Beef is voluntarily recalling 29,339 pounds of ground beef that may contain salmonella. The 85-percent-lean ground beef was produced at Cargill's plant in Wyalusing, Pa., on May 25, and repackaged for sale to consumers by customers of the Kansas-based company. Cargill President John Keating says in a statement, Food borne illnesses are unfortunate and we are sorry for anyone who became sick from eating ground beef we may have produced. Hannaford's says consumers should check their ground beef for use or sell dates between May 29 and June 16. Refunds will be offered for ground beef with those dates that is returned.

POVERTY IN AMERICA - VO: 20 - The ranks of America's poor are on track to climb to levels unseen in nearly half a century, erasing gains from the war on poverty in the 1960s amid a weak economy and fraying government safety net. Census figures for 2011 will be released this fall in the critical weeks ahead of the November elections. The Associated Press surveyed more than a dozen economists, think tanks and academics, both nonpartisan and those with known liberal or conservative leanings, and found a broad consensus: The official poverty rate will rise from 15.1 percent in 2010, climbing as high as 15.7 percent. Several predicted a more modest gain, but even a 0.1 percentage point increase would put poverty at the highest level since 1965. Poverty is spreading at record levels across many groups, from underemployed workers and suburban families to the poorest poor. More discouraged workers are giving up on the job market, leaving them vulnerable as unemployment aid begins to run out. Suburbs are seeing increases in poverty, including in such political battlegrounds as Colorado, Florida and Nevada, where voters are coping with a new norm of living hand to mouth. I grew up going to Hawaii every summer. Now I'm here, applying for assistance because it's hard to make ends meet. It's very hard to adjust, said Laura Fritz, 27, of Wheat Ridge, Colo., describing her slide from rich to poor as she filled out aid forms at a county center. Since 2000, large swaths of Jefferson County just outside Denver have seen poverty nearly double. Fritz says she grew up wealthy in the Denver suburb of Highlands Ranch, but fortunes turned after her parents lost a significant amount of money in the housing bust. Stuck in a half-million dollar house, her parents began living off food stamps and Fritz's college money evaporated. She tried joining the Army but was injured during basic training.

DEADLY TRUCK CRASH-TEXAS - At least 11 people died Sunday and another 12 were injured after a pickup truck loaded with passengers left the highway and crashed into trees in rural South Texas, authorities said. State troopers and Goliad County sheriff's investigators were investigating what prompted the single-vehicle crash and did not immediately know the names and ages of the victims. Gerald Bryant, a spokesman for the Texas Department of Public Safety, told The Associated Press they were various ages and that he personally

07/24/2012 - ARPAIO RACIAL PROFILING - An Arizona sheriff known nationally for his hardline stance on illegal immigration is expected to take the witness stand Tuesday and face allegations that his trademark immigration sweeps amounted to racial profiling against Hispanics. Lawyers who say that Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio's office disproportionately singled out Latinos in the patrols accused him of launching some sweeps based on emails and letters that don't allege crimes, but complain only that dark-skinned are congregating in a given area or speaking Spanish. A group of Latinos who say they have been discriminated against filed the civil lawsuit against the sheriff, who makes jail inmates sleep in tents and wrote an autobiography titled America's Toughest Sheriff. Arpaio has long denied racial profiling allegations. He declined to comment Monday through a spokesman. During the sweeps that are at the center of the case, sheriff's deputies flood an area of a city -- in some cases, heavily Latino areas -- over several days to seek out traffic violators and arrest other offenders. Illegal immigrants accounted for 57 percent of the 1,500 people arrested in the 20 sweeps conducted by Arpaio's office since January 2008, according to figures provided by the sheriff's department, which hasn't conducted any such patrols since October

POLL SAYS MOST AMERICANS FRUSTRATED WITH 2012 RACE - Now, a new poll shows that most Americans aren't happy with how the race is going. The Knights of Columbus-Marist survey was released Tuesday morning, and it shows 78-percent of voters are frustrated by the ongoing political battle. Three-quarters say this election year is more intense with its negative campaigning than in recent years and 64-percent of Americans say the negative ads harm the political process. Pollsters surveyed more than a thousand adults by phone the week of July 9-th.

PAYING FOR DRUG DISPOSAL - A proposed ordinance that would put the pharmaceutical industry on the hook for not only making drugs, but also getting rid of them, is scheduled to be taken up by California's Alameda County on Tuesday. The Alameda County Board of Supervisors plans to vote on an ordinance that would require drug makers to pay for programs to dispose of expired and unused drugs. Government and industry officials said the ordinance would be the first of its kind nationwide. Advocates for the law said that unused drugs pose a danger to the environment and people's health. Critics say no evidence shows drug take-back programs help the environment or curb drug abuse. Supervisor Nate Miley, who introduced the ordinance, said Monday that his constituents have complained of unused pills leading to accidental overdoses, ending up in the hands of children and entering the water supply. Alameda County residents currently can drop off their old medications at 28 different spots at a cost of about \$330,000 a year, officials estimated.

COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY - U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan is urging colleges and universities to adopt an easy-to-understand financial aid form to help students make smarter decisions on where to

study, how to pay and determine what they'll owe. The Department of Education and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau are unveiling a shopping sheet Tuesday that would provide each incoming student with information on the costs of tuition, housing and other fees. The one-page document also is designed to help students figure out how much they would receive in grants and scholarships and what options are available for loans. Additionally, it would also provide details on the percentage of students who graduate, how much the average student pays monthly on federal loans after graduation and the default rate. Colleges and universities will not be required to use the form. Duncan said he will be sending an open letter encouraging all institutions to adopt it. In June, the Education Department announced that 10 universities had agreed to provide information similar to what is in the new form.

HOME VALUES RISE FOR FIRST TIME IN 5 YEARS - Home prices hit a bottom and are finally bouncing back, according to an industry report released Tuesday. Nationwide, home values rose 0.2% year-over-year to a median \$149,300 during the second quarter, the first annual increase since 2007, real estate listing site Zillow reported. Prices were up 2.1% from the first quarter. Even though June marked the fourth consecutive month of home value increases, overall home prices are still down almost 24% since April 2007, when Zillow began to track home values. It seems clear that the country has hit a bottom in home values, said Zillow's chief economist Stan Humphries. The housing recovery is holding together despite lower-than-expected job growth, indicating that it has some organic strength of its own. Last winter, Zillow projected that the housing market turnaround would not arrive until the end of the year. Other home price indexes have also recorded gains lately, including the S&P/Case-Shiller home price index. In its latest release, it reported that home prices in 20 major markets rose 1.3% in April, the first monthly increase in seven months. Zillow uses a different methodology in calculating home values than other home price indexes like Case-Shiller and the Federal Housing Finance Agency. Sales of foreclosed, bank-owned properties, for example, are not factored into Zillow's data. Zillow does include short sales, however, which are more difficult to distinguish from conventional sales.

RALLIES TO RAISE MINIMUM WAGE PLANNED - Dozens of rallies are expected all over the country today demanding an increase in the federal minimum wage. Supporters of a bill introduced in the Senate earlier this year, want the rate raised from 7-dollars-25 cents an hour to 9-dollars-80 cents. They say pay hikes for the country's lowest earners would stimulate the economy because they would be more likely to spend their raises. Opponents say the measure would actually cause thousands of workers to lose their jobs because of the higher costs of hiring and training

=====

ARPAIO CASE - There were no TV cameras, no scrum of reporters, no protesters -- and there was no swagger inside the courtroom when the typically brash Arizona Sheriff Joe Arpaio took the stand to face critics who say he and his deputies racially profile Hispanics. Under questioning from lawyers representing a group of Latinos who are suing him and his department, Arpaio spoke in a hush, offering that he was suffering from the flu. The Maricopa County sheriff responded quietly, clearing his throat often, and saying the statement was taken out of context. He added that if a person were to cross the U.S.-Mexico border on foot over four days in the desert that person could be dirty. The case represents

the first time the sheriff's office has been accused of systematic racial profiling and will serve as a precursor to a similar yet broader civil rights lawsuit filed against Arpaio by the U.S. Justice Department.

MEDICAL MARIJUANA, LOS ANGELES - The Los Angeles City Council decided unanimously on Tuesday to ban all storefront in violation of federal law but has become the largest collection of pot dispensaries in California. The 14-0 vote by the council comes after conflicting court decisions on how far local jurisdictions in California can go in cracking down on the cannabis shops. Some observers say the issue could end up before the state's Supreme Court. The state's voters in 1996 became the first to allow the drug as medicine, which inspired dispensaries to open. Seventeen states and the District of Columbia now allow medical marijuana, but the federal government holds that pot is a dangerous and illegal narcotic and has shut down dispensaries in several states

PA. WON'T USE VOTER FRAUD ARGUMENT AT HEARING OVER ID LAW - When Pennsylvania officials begin their defense of the state's new voter identification law in court Wednesday, they will do so after agreeing to abandon a central argument for why such laws are needed. In a Pennsylvania court. The state says it has never investigated claims of in-person voter fraud and so won't argue that such fraud has occurred in the past. As a result, the state says, it has no evidence that the crime has ever been committed. The state also says it won't present any evidence or argument that in-person voter fraud is likely to occur on Election Day if the voter ID law isn't enacted. More from the filing, which also was signed by the attorney for the plaintiffs, who are Pennsylvania residents suing to overturn the law: There have been no investigations or prosecutions of in-person voter fraud in Pennsylvania; and the parties do not have direct personal knowledge of any such investigations or prosecutions in other states

USA-BANKS - Hundreds of bailed-out banks are still struggling to repay taxpayers and will soon find it even harder to make required dividend payments to the U.S. Treasury, according to a report on Wednesday by the watchdog for the government bailout program. Of the 707 banks that received taxpayer money from the government's Troubled Asset Relief Program starting in 2008, Also known as TARP, about half have repaid the U.S. Treasury. However, 137 of those banks used a government-loan program to repay their taxpayer debts, according to the watchdog's quarterly report to Congress. And of the 325 banks still propped up with taxpayer money, 203 have missed dividend or interest payments, with some missing as many as 13 payments since receiving capital injections at the height of the financial crisis, said the report. Adding to their woes, the dividend that the bailed-out banks are required to pay to Treasury is set to increase to 9 percent from the current 5 percent as early as 2013. Those banks are not able to raise the capital that is required to get out of TARP," said Christy Romero, the special inspector general for the bailout program. "We are very concerned about those banks, and want those banks to stand on their own feet without government assistance

NOTHING TO REPORT

ECONOMISTS EXPECT REPORT TO SHOW MEAGER BUSINESS - The U.S. economy grew at an annual rate of just 1.5 percent from April through June, as Americans cut back sharply on spending. The slowest growth in a year adds to worries that the economy could be stalling three years after the recession ended. The Commerce Department also says the economy grew a little better than previously thought in

the January-March quarter. It raised its estimate to a 2 percent rate, up from 1.9 percent. Growth at or below 2 percent isn't enough to lower the unemployment rate, which was 8.2 percent last month. And most economists don't expect growth to pick up much in the second half of the year. Europe's financial crisis and a looming budget crisis in the U.S. are expected to slow business investment further.

AIRLINE FARES HIT ALL-TIME HIGH - Airline passengers spent a record amount, on average, to fly in the first quarter of this year. The Department of Transportation says the average price of a domestic ticket soared to 373 dollars in the first three months of 2012. That's a nearly five-percent jump over the same period a year earlier. The previous all-time high was 370 bucks, set last spring. But the ticket price surge wasn't a boon for carriers. U-S Airlines reported a one-point-seven-billion dollar loss for the quarter, according to an industry spokesman. Among the top 100 airports, Cincinnati passengers paid the highest average fare -- a whopping 526 dollars per trip. Atlantic City, New Jersey was the lowest average, at 157 dollars.

FORD RECALL - The automaker says gas pedals can stick in 485-thousand escapes sold in the u-s... And mavericks... Sold in europe. The cars were from the 2001 through 2004 model years. Ford says the cars may have faulty cruise control systems. It's linked to more than a dozen accidents... And at least one fatality

AIDS INCREASE - AIDS is graying. By the end of the decade, the government estimates, more than half of Americans living with HIV will be over 50. Even in developing countries, more people with the AIDS virus are surviving to middle age and beyond. That's good news -- but it's also a challenge. There's growing evidence that people who have spent decades battling the virus may be aging prematurely. At the International AIDS Conference this week, numerous studies are examining how heart disease, thinning bones and a list of other health problems typically seen in the senior years seem to hit many people with HIV when they're only in their 50s. I'm 54, but I feel older," said Carolyn Massey of Laurel, Md., who has lived with HIV for nearly 20 years.

DISTRACTED WALKING - A young man talking on a cellphone meanders along the edge of a lonely train platform at night. Suddenly he stumbles, loses his balance and pitches over the side, landing head first on the tracks. Fortunately there were no trains approaching the Philadelphia-area station at that moment, because it took the man several minutes to recover enough to climb out of danger. But the incident, captured last year by a security camera and provided to The Associated Press, underscores the risks of what government officials and safety experts say is a growing problem: distracted walking. On city streets, in suburban parking lots and in shopping centers, there is usually someone strolling while talking on a phone, texting with his head down, listening to music, or playing a video game. The problem isn't as widely discussed as distracted driving, but the danger is real. Reports of injuries to distracted walkers treated at hospital emergency rooms have more than quadrupled in the past seven years and are almost certainly underreported. There has been a spike in pedestrians killed and injured in traffic accidents, but there is no reliable data on how many were distracted by electronics. State and local officials are struggling to figure out how to respond, and in some cases asking how far government should go in trying to protect people from themselves

TAR: ATF OFFICIALS FAST - A Republican draft report says five officials at the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives share much of the blame for what went wrong with the Arizona gun-smuggling probe called Operation Fast and Furious. After an 18-month probe, the report by investigators for Rep. Darrell Issa (EYE'-suh) says many people up and down the chain of command in the ATF share the blame for the bungled case. The investigation singled out five key figures in the controversy, ranging from the special agent in charge of the ATF's Phoenix field division up to the agency's director. Agents employed a risky tactic called gun-walking in the operation, and many of the weapons wound up at crime scenes in Mexico and the U.S.

SCHOOL SHOPPING - A Deloitte survey has found about nine out of ten consumers plan to spend the same or more on back-to-school shopping this year. About 60 percent of those who plan to spend more say they'll do so because items cost more, and more than one-third say their children need more expensive items this year. Deloitte retail analyst Scott Erickson says school budget cuts also have had some impact. A growing number of parents say they need to buy more school supplies for their kids because their schools are buying less. Nearly half of the consumers surveyed feel the economy is still in recession. But 74 percent feel their household financial situation is the same or better than a year

=====END OF REPORT=====